Decline in Railway Passenger Traffic

1030. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railway have experienced a continuous decline in their position related to the road transport system;

(b) if so, the trend during last five years;

(c) whether the skewed tariff policy in favour of ordinary passenger tariff is responsible for this state of affairs; and

(d) if so, the details of corrective measures taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) and (b) The latest estimates available for traffic carried by roadways are for the year 1997-98. As per these estimates and records available, the share of Railways in the total traffic movement in 1997-98 shows a decline, on consideration of the share in 1950-51 as the basis. The records indicate that for 1950-51 the share of Railways *vis-a-vis* the total traffic movement was 89% for freight and 68.4% for passenger. As per Economic Survey of India 1997-98, the traffic carried by roadways is 60% of the total freight movement and 80% of total passenger movement. Correspondingly, 40% of the total freight movement and 20% of total passenger movement in 1997-98 is presumed to be on Rail.

While Railways maintain comprehensive records of the traffic carried by them, similar data is not maintained by roadways. As no details for the current level of traffic on road is available, the trend of share of rail to road traffic over the last 5 years can not be estimated.

(c) A policy of restraint has been followed in the past by the Railways towards increasing ordinary passenger fares in keeping with the socio-economic objectives of the Government. The subsidisation of passenger traffic by freight as also cross-subsidisation within

different commodities of freight and different segments of passenger business is partially responsible for the declining share of Railways in the total transport system.

(d) Corrective measures with respect to above have been initiated in the Railway Budget presented to Parliament for the year 2002-03 *e.g.*

(i) Rationalization of freight rate structure to remove the anomalies and thereby making the freight rates more attractive.

(ii) Rationalization of fares for different classes of travel in passenger services, with indexing of the fare structure in the upper classes, with respect to the second class fare.

Administrative cost of Railways

1031. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the administrative costs of Railways have been on the increase during the last three years;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of steps taken to control the administrative costs?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The administrative costs on Indian Railways is represented by